

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested. Claims 1-11, 13 and 14 are pending. By the present amendment, claims 1, 6-9, and 11 are amended, claim 12 is canceled, and claims 13 and 14 are added. Claim 12 is canceled and thus, the objection to the drawings and rejection of claim 12 should be withdrawn. The specification has been corrected in accordance to the examiner's suggestion to overcome the objection.

Claims 6-9 are amended to substitute the expression "sleeve-shape" for "sleeve-like" to make the expression definite. In claims 6 and 8, the phrase "a drive screw" has been changed to "said drive screw" to refer to the drive screw of claim 1. Claim 11 has been amended to substitute the phrase "aligned openings into said gas bag holding element (18) and said generator holder (12)" for the phrase "two parts" so that those elements in the new phrase relate to the elements recited at lines 2-4 of claim 11. Therefore, in view of the above-mentioned amendments, the rejection of claims 6-11 should be withdrawn. Claims 1 and 11 are amended to better clarify the definition of a drive screw. Claim 1 is also been amended to remove the "means" language, which is unnecessary for the allowance of claim 1.

Claims 1 and 11 are amended to recite that the gas bag is connected with said generator holder (12) via said gas bag holding element (18). Neither Davis et al., Sutherland et al., Seidl et al., Loudin et al., nor any other prior art

reference taken either alone or in combination discloses or suggests all of the features claimed in claims 1 or 11.

In particular, Davis et al. does not disclose a gas bag that is connected with the generator holder via the gas bag holding element. By contrast, Davis et al. shows a main body 12 in which the ends are closed by end plates 24, 26. The air bag is retained between the side walls 14, 16.

Also, it would not be obvious to modify Sutherland in view of Seidl et al. and Loudin et al. to provide the invention claimed in claims 1 or 11. To establish a claim of obviousness, there must be some suggestion or motivation to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings (MPEP §706.02(j)). Further, if the proposed combination "would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified, then the teachings of the references are not sufficient to render the claims prima facie obvious." (MPEP §2143.01).

There is no suggestion to modify Sutherland to connect the gas bag with the generator holder via the gas bag holding element using a drive screw. Also, to modify the Sutherland et al. reference with the fastener 20 of Seidl et al. would affect the principle operation of Sutherland et al. In particular, the Seidl et al. discloses frangible means 30 in shank of the fastener that will fracture when a predetermine force is applied to the means 30 in order to allow the air bag cover 24, which is fastened to the fastener 20, to open for deployment of the air bag. By contrast, the screw assembly 56

Serial No. 10/645,242

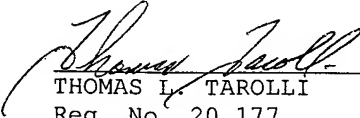
of Sutherland et al. has to be firmly attached to the generator holder, especially in the moment of deployment of the gas bag, to secure the gas generator and gas bag to the gas bag module so that gas bag can properly deploy.

Therefore, in view of the above mentioned reasons, claims 1 and 11 are allowable. Claims 2-10, 13, and 14 depend directly or indirectly from claim 11 and are therefore allowable as depending from an allowable claim and for the specific features recited therein.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


THOMAS I. TAROLLI
Reg. No. 20,177

TAROLLI, SUNDHEIM, COVELL,
TUMMINO & SZABO L.L.P.
1111 Leader Building
526 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-1400
Phone: (216) 621-2234
Fax: (216) 621-4072
Customer No. 26, 294